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WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method of providing a network communication
2 status description based on user characteristics, the method
3 comprising:

4 receiving a status indication from a first networked
5 computer in response to a user's request for information;
6 determining one or more characteristics of the user
7 who issued the request; and

8 providing a status description corresponding to the
9 received status and the determined user characteristics.

1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising
2 transmitting the status description to a second networked
3 computer.

1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the status
2 indication comprises an indication of the success or failure
3 of the user's request.

1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the status
2 indication comprises a status code.

1 5. The method of claim 4, wherein the status code
2 comprises an HTTP (HyperText Transfer Protocol) status code.

1 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more
2 characteristics comprise technical proficiency.

1 7. The method of claim 6, wherein the determining
2 the one or more characteristics comprises inferring a level
3 of technical proficiency.

1 8. The method of claim 7, wherein inferring a level
2 of technical proficiency comprises inferring a level of
3 technical proficiency based on a user's previous request or
4 requests for information.

1 9. The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more
2 characteristics comprise one or more preferred languages.

1 10. The method of claim 9, wherein the determining
2 the one or more characteristics of the user comprises
3 inferring the preferred language.

1 11. The method of claim 10, wherein inferring a
2 preferred language comprises determining a user's address.

1 12. The method of claim 10, wherein inferring a
2 preferred language comprises determining an access number
3 used by the user.

1 13. The method of claim 1, wherein the status
2 description comprises text.

1 14. The method of claim 1, wherein the status
2 description comprises speech.

1 15. The method of claim 1, wherein the status
2 description comprises at least one of the following:
3 graphics, video, animation, sound, and instructions.

1 16. The method of claim 1, wherein the user's
2 request comprises an HTTP request for a resource.

1 17. The method of claim 1, wherein providing a
2 status description comprises selecting a status description
3 from a database of status descriptions.

1 18. A method of providing a network communication
2 status description based on user characteristics, the method
3 comprising:

4 receiving an HTTP (HyperText Transfer Protocol)
5 status code from a first networked computer in response to a
6 user's HTTP request for a URL (Universal Resource Locator)
7 provided by the first networked computer;

8 determining one or more characteristics of the user
9 who issued the request;

10 selecting a status description from a database of
11 status descriptions based on the received HTTP status code
12 and the determined user characteristics; and

13 transmitting the status description to a second
14 networked computer.

1 19. The method of claim 18, wherein the one or more
2 characteristics comprise user technical proficiency.

1 20. The method of claim 19, wherein the one or more
2 characteristics comprise one or more preferred languages of
3 the user.

1 21. A proxy for providing a network communication
2 status description based on user characteristics, the proxy
3 comprising:

4 means for receiving a status code from a first
5 networked computer in response to a user's request for
6 information;

7 means for determining one or more characteristics of
8 the user who issued the request;

9 means for selecting a status description from a
10 database of status descriptions based on the received status
11 code and the determined user characteristics; and

12 means for transmitting the status description to a
13 second networked computer.

1 22. The method of claim 21, wherein the one or more
2 characteristics comprise user technical proficiency.

1 23. The method of claim 21, wherein the one or more
2 characteristics comprise one or more preferred languages of
3 the user.

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